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北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY

Beijing on the move

Local Beijingers are sitting down to learn from longtime expats about how their capital has changed since the days of the Qing Dynasty.

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Dawn of the micro movie

Unlike short films of the past, many micro movies are casting big-name stars.



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This year's Beijing Nine Gates Jazz Festival will favor domestic jazz bands over foreign acts.

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Guide to aiding the elderly exposes public's fear

By Zhang Dongya

The Ministry of Health issued a guide Tuesday informing people of what they should do when they see an elderly person fall in the street.

According to the guide, falls are the primary cause of injury and death to persons older than 65. It said that people who have fallen should not be assisted in standing up, because in some cases such attempts at help can cause even more serious injury.

The 41-page guide explains the risks of different falls and how to help.

The guide advises people to observe and inquire about a person's condition before trying to help them up. Learn precisely how the fall occurred if possible. Persons who have been knocked unconscious by the fall may require medical attention, so dial 120 to request emergency assistance.

In recent years, there have been many stories of elderly people abusing their would-be assistants.

In 2006, a Nanjing resident Peng Yu who helped an elderly woman who fell was later sued by her.

In 2009, a Tianjin driver named Xu Yunhe helped an elderly woman but later was accused of causing her to fall in the first place. The woman demanded 108,606 yuan in compensation.

Although in both cases a non-monetary settlement was reached, many people have become reluctant to help out when they see an injured person.



Few people dare to help the elderly due to reports them abusing their would-be assistants. CFP Photo

Last Friday, an 88-year-old man in Wuhan reportedly died when he fell in front of the entrance to a neighborhood grocery market. The many onlookers would not "dare" to help him.

His family was upset and angry. "Don't people dare to give a hand if an old person falls down on the street? Has that virtue vanished completely?" his son said.

Lei Hong, a professor of sociology at Huazhong University of Science and Technology, said the incidents in 2006 and 2009 have scared many people into standing

idle when someone needs assistance in a public place. He said there need to be laws passed to protect people who offer assistance if the social climate is to change.

Doctors said they support the guide's advice, and that many falls do require the aid of someone with professional medical training.

A survey on Sina Weibo found that more than 40 percent of respondents were unwilling to follow the guide's suggestions about how to help the elderly because the guide offers no legal protection: 20 percent chose to help, but not

because of the guide.

"The entire situation makes me hesitate before offering help. I worry that if I offer a hand, I first have to gather several witnesses who can show that I am trying to help and not hurt the injured person. I regret that an act of kindness requires me to go find witnesses, but it seems necessary at this time," said Chen Feihong, a Beijing resident.

China has more than 150 million people who are 65 or older. An estimated 40 million will have an accident and fall this year.

Foreigners withdraw hunting application

By Han Manman

Seven US citizens who had applied to hunt in China recently withdrew their application to the State Forestry Administration (SFA).

The withdrawal may have been due to the prolonged approval time, said Wang Wei, general manager of China Adventure Travel, one of the two travel agencies that helped the tourists submit their application.

Wang said four of the seven hunters had applied through his agency for what would have been a weeklong hunting trip beginning September 16.

"They have waited for a long time for SFA to issue a license. And now, even if the SFA gave permission, it would not coincide with their vacation dates," Wang said.

Wang said SFA has returned the applicants' materials on Monday.

The highly controversial application to hunt nine blue sheep and seven Tibetan gazelles in the Qinghai Province Dulan Hunting Preserve was submitted last month.

According to the country's wild animal protection laws and regulations, it is legal to hunt for the purposes of scientific research, breeding or exhibition.

Many Chinese people said they were concerned that if permission was granted, hunting would become unsustainable.

Seventy animal protection organizations in China presented an open letter to the State Forestry Administration expressing "great indignation."

In an online survey conducted by the popular Web portal Sina, 97 percent of the 1,000 respondents opposed lifting the ban on foreign hunters.

But supporters said the activity would promote research, and that hunting fees could provide funding for conservation work. They said that hunting, when properly managed, can help protect wildlife.

The SFA was expected to issue its decision before September 2, but intense debate may have slowed the political process.

Wang, a hunter with 25 years of experience, said the withdrawal of the application doesn't mean he has given up the idea of helping foreigners to hunt in China.

He said that any resumption of game hunting in China will always be met by such critics.

"The public really needs to understand more about hunting and sustainable modes of conservation before attacking the sport so fiercely," he said.

Wang said his agency will submit an application again if more foreign tourists express interest.

Warning signs erected to ease subway congestion

By Han Manman

Beijing hopes to ease subway congestion by posting signs to warn passengers of peak hours.

The Batong Line, one of the most congested lines in Beijing due to the relatively cheap real estate prices along the line, is being used as a trial. It has posted signs since this week to warn passengers of peak hours.

"The notice is mainly aimed at passengers who are not in a hurry - the ones who arrive in advance and can use another means of transport," said Gao Chunling, director of Tongzhou Beiyuan station, which is among its busiest.

Many stations on the line, including Tongzhou Beiyuan and Shuangqiao, limit entry at peak hours.

She said the "most congested" period spans from 7:30 to 8:30 am based on "years of observation and experience."

Gao said that, if successful, the Batong line's warning system may be introduced to other subway lines.

Many subway passengers doubt the signs will be any help



The Batong Line is warning passengers of peak hours. CFP Photo

in reducing congestion.

"It is meaningless. No matter how crowded it is, I still have to ride the subway to work to avoid being late," said Chen Ziqi, a daily

passenger on the Batong Line.

He advised the subway management put more trains on the line or decrease the intervals between trains during

the rush hours.

In addition to the warning signs, the government is considering imposing congestion fees on cars that use certain roads. It hopes the fees will encourage more residents to use public transportation.

"By 2015, our goal is to have public transportation handling 50 percent of the traffic volume inside Fifth Ring Road," said Wang Yingjian, a senior official from the municipal commission of development and reform.

"We also are trying to reduce travel times between new satellite towns in the suburbs and Fifth Ring Road to less than 60 minutes.

However, the government did not specify what the charges would be, which roads would be affected or how the fees would be collected.

Beijing, which has 4.8 million registered vehicles, has been trying to tackle the problem of congestion since the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Measures have included restricting car purchases, increasing parking fees, widening roads and expanding its subway network.

Living on trash

Recyclers scour the capital's garbage to make a living

By Huang Daohen

That old lady whose hands grasp at the empty plastic bottles of passersby isn't trying to save the planet: she's trying to survive.

In major cities like Beijing and Shanghai, the bulk of recycling work is left to the hands of such trash collectors, who sell it on to bulk traders.

Unfortunately, the country's plastic recycling business – mostly run by private companies – is anything but clean and green.



A trash collector eats his lunch on the job site at a recycling center on the city's outskirts.

Guang Niu/Getty Images

Recycling by tricycle

After walking a long way to find a garbage bin labeled "Recyclable" and tossing in your empty bottle, you may feel like you've done your part to protect Beijing's environment.

But where does that plastic go?

Every 10 minutes, a recycler will pass by that bin on a flat-bed tricycle to pick through plastic bottles, tin cans and other recyclable refuse.

After hitting the bins, they go on to circle through the nearby communities calling for people to, "Bring out your trash!"

Li Fuyang is among tens of thousands of migrant workers who come to the capital to work as scrap resellers.

Born in a remote village in Hunan Province, Li now makes a living by collecting cardboard, paper, empty bottles and spent home appliances. He buys old books and newspapers by the kilogram and broken appliances by volume. He sells the paper and plastic to recycling centers and strips the appliances for parts.

To save money on trash transportation, Li lives next to a recycling plant in Dougezhuang, Chaoyang District. His is one of 100 households nestled between towers of plastic bottles and other recycled materials.

Li said half his neighbors are fellow migrant workers. "The rent is cheap here," said Li, who was playing with his three-year-old daughter in the muddy alley outside his home.

Business used to be good, and Li's family could save 1,500 yuan per month.

Dougezhuang is among the dozens of urban recycling stations. Statistics from city management show that an estimated 170,000 migrants in the city make their living by selling scrap to it and other plants.

Wen'an meltdown

But the business isn't without risk.

On Wednesday afternoon, when local residents were hoping to sell a load of water bottles and paper boxes to Li, they found he was gone.

"He is not here," said neighbor sur-named Wang. "The family returned to their hometown and won't be back for several months."

The recycling stations have hit a point



A man carts recyclable trash on his tricycle in Beijing.

IC Photo

"The prosperity of these small private businesses is a result of market selection. Simply halting the business won't ease pollution problems."

where they now have too many plastic bottles in stock that they have been unable to sell due to a new policy passed by the Wen'an government in Hebei Province.

Like Li, many recyclers chose to leave. Wang's wife returned to their hometown with their children last month.

Wang said recycled plastics from Beijing, Tianjin and other cities in the north used to be easy to sell in Wen'an, famous as the Capital of Plastics. The city, located 120 kilometers south of Beijing, has the nation's largest cluster of privately-run plastics recycling stations.

Local media reported that small plastics recycling shops are common in Wen'an. Many farmers have abandoned their fields in favor of the more profitable business.

The plastics recycling industry has evolved into a rather mature chain, from collecting to sorting, cleansing, melting and molding.

Plastic waste even arrives in containers from Japan, Russia, Canada and the US

"Recycled plastics are sold at about half the price of new plastics, but they still make a huge profit," Wang said.

But this formerly "sustainable" industry has been identified as a source of rampant pollution. Local residents told Xinhua that the pollution has seriously damaged their health, and many fear that their ground water has been contaminated.

To rein in pollution, the Wen'an government banned all plastic recycling last month.

The loss of the Wen'an market has caused a crash in recycling demand. "How can you buy if you have no one to sell it to?" Wang said.

Plastics recycling dilemma

The problems in Wen'an are by no means unique.

China is the world's largest consumer of plastics and also its largest importer of plastic waste.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, China imported more than 550,000 metric tons of plastic waste last January, buying as

much as a third of the UK's recyclables and all of the waste paper exported from the west coast of the US.

In 2008, the country consumed 52 million tons of plastic.

The nation's other plastic recycling bases in Taizhou, Zhejiang Province, Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province and Laizhou, Shandong Province, face similar pollution problems.

But Yang Yingjun, a researcher and analyst at the China Plastics Processing Industry Association, said the real problem is the country's lack of large-scale recycling enterprises.

China has 30,000 small enterprises that are recycling plastic. Most of these are family-run plants that are not equipped to contain and treat pollution.

In order to be more competitive, they usually run at a lower cost and cause more environmental damage, Yang said.

Yang said a ban on plastic recycling was not the solution. "The prosperity of these small private businesses is a result of market selection. Simply halting the business won't ease pollution problems," he said.

Yang said the small factories in Wen'an need guidance and support from the government. But the government has no regulations to guide the recycling industry despite its rabid promotion of "green economy," he said.

Yang said the government should learn from the experience of Buenos Aires in dealing with its unlicensed migrant recyclers. The Argentinian authorities reached an agreement to improve their recycling and waste collection, while recognizing the efforts of the grassroots recyclers.

In Dougezhang, Wang said his wife would return to Beijing in two months to rejoin him in the city. He was neither angry nor disappointed about their current separation.

"It would be nice if she could be here. But we have to save money, so there is no other choice," he said. "We are used to life being like this."

Undaunted by the current hardships, Wang and other recyclers are working to establish connections to waste traders in other cities to make up for the loss of Wen'an.



What makes a city livable?

Opinions divided after Beijing named the country's most livable

Is a city with low crime rates, profound culture background and easy access to health care or education good enough for people to live in? The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) thinks so.

In its latest biannual survey, the division of *The Economist* named Beijing the most livable city on the Chinese mainland. Globally, the capital is ranked 72nd out of the world's 140 cities providing the best living conditions.

Melbourne topped the list, followed by Vienna and Vancouver. Osaka is the top-ranked city in Asia, at 12th.

(Agencies)

place, followed by Tokyo at 18th and Hong Kong at 31st.

After Beijing, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province and Tianjin came in at 73rd and 74th place. Shanghai ranked 70th, while Shenzhen ranked 82nd and Dalian 85th.

After Beijing, the survey considered social stability, the environment, health care, culture, infrastructure and education.

Many locals were surprised to find Beijing as the mainland's top-rated city, ahead of cities like Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, which even didn't make the list.

(Agencies)



A customer wearing a face mask browses fashion items at a shop in Beijing.

Liu Jin/IC Photo

What ordinary people say

City has a long way to go to fulfill its promise

By Huang Daohen

When news of the EIU ranking made the rounds this week, many locals were baffled. The city's title as most livable city was mocked on the Internet and in the streets.

"Most livable city? Maybe for the millionaires," said Shi Hui, an office worker at a local company. Every morning, the 25-year-old takes an hour and a half to commute to work in a crowded bus.

Terrible traffic congestion

aside, the climate is awful, Shi said. Though the air quality is much better than it used to be, it's still horrible during the summer. "I don't open my windows because of the dust and dirt in the air," Shi said.

The only time the air is nice is after a rainstorm, but every time it rains, it floods the city due to bad water drainage, said Shi.

Shi's complaints were echoed by Miles Hu, 26, a business consultant. "I don't think the ranking is right," said Hu, who often

goes on business trips to Hangzhou and Suzhou.

"Suzhou is a more livable city to me. People there live a stress-free and affordable life," Hu said. "Though Beijing is modern and attractive, there's more pressure here, especially for young people."

But Tian Ming, associate professor who teaches social development at Beijing Normal University, said such feelings are understandable.

People are used to seeing

reports or surveys by local government-backed institutions, but what data did the EIU staff use to reach their conclusion?

Tian said rankings depend on what criteria the creators use and what is important to its residents. "People from outside Beijing won't like to admit it, but the city indeed has the best social order and system," he said.

While the air quality is bad, it is much better than it used to be. Traffic may still be a night-

mare, but public transportation is cheap and efficient, though crowded. And in terms of culture and art, the city has much more going on than any other city in the country.

"Beijing is like New York. While many complain about the city, people keep coming, simply for its history, culture and career opportunities," Tian said.

Beijing is improving and is a place of promise and hope, but there remains a long way to go, Tian said.

变动的社会



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Questions of style

'Good' designs sink foreign websites



Chinese employees are vacating the nearly empty office of GaoPeng in Shanghai.

Wang JianRong/IC Photo

Less is not more

"Why are Chinese websites and their design so hideous?" asked one American IT engineer when he first arrived in the country in 2007.

"I simply could not find a Chinese website that was visually appealing," he said.

If there is a Chinese Web aesthetic, it appears to be defined by ludicrous misuse of graphics and excessive animations.

It seems as though Chinese designers have locked onto and fused together every bad design practice that American and European designers strive to avoid.

"Maybe it's because China is a developing country and simply hasn't caught up," he said.

But the country's 500 million Internet users appear quite comfortable with the chaotic Chinese Web and its overwhelming flood of bad links that lead to advertisements rather than content.

"I prefer the style of sites like QQ.com because they let me get a glimpse of everything in a single page," said Thomas Lee, the technology director of Renren, the country's top social networking site.

Lee, a 29-year-old "senior netizen," said it is China's

design tradition.

"When you get used to one style, you won't bother to change or adjust to another, whether it's more aesthetically pleasing or not," he said.

The simple truth is that on the Chinese Internet, less may not be more, Lee said.

That explains why the American giant Groupon failed miserably in its China venture.

Named GaoPeng, the Chinese branch of Groupon had joined with Tencent, a major local news portal. The site's interface was clean, with one group buy item featured on each page according to the reader's location.

But its fine design and carefully chosen colors did not help GaoPeng attract Chinese users. According to Bloomberg news, GaoPeng has closed its offices in many cities and sacked hundreds of employees.

Groupon and GaoPeng said last month that the closures are part of a change in strategy, but Lee said it is due to the company's failure to provide a Web interface that suits local browsing habits.

Ideology matters

Ideology is another reason why overseas Internet businesses

stumble in China.

The great exit of Google was one example. In April 2010, Google announced that it would pull out of the mainland market after working years to build a minority 25 percent share of the market.

Though the search giant blamed its move on government censorship, many believed it was more likely a convenient excuse to escape from its failed market strategy, said Zhao Xiao, an economics professor at the University of Science and Technology Beijing.

Google is a company and business comes first: if it put ideology before business, it could be found as delinquent to its shareholders, he said.

Zhao said foreign enterprises in China, especially those in the Internet field, often forget that the country's ideological system is the core of domestic business. Internet businesses especially are intertwined with state-owned businesses and academic networks.

"This has made China a tough market for foreign Internet companies," Zhao said.

Feel the pulse

Internet business is a war that never ends. The competition between MSN and QQ for

instant messaging users is a prime example.

Currently, MSN dominates the instant messaging market in every country except China, where the local QQ is in the lead.

MSN had a 20 percent market share in China in 2004, so it is hard to understand how it slumped to only 4 percent in 2010.

Renren's Lee said MSN failed to update its services according to Chinese users' behavior shifts. MSN targeted the middle-class and focused on offering privacy protection.

But most Chinese users are concerned less about privacy than convenience, Lee said. In that area, MSN caused many users headaches by blocking the transfer of RAR format file archives due to security concerns.

QQ, by lowering its privacy protection and providing various control tools, catered to the young generation, picked up more users.

The company has also been reluctant to target any specific type of users. "They welcome all types of users, regardless of their economic status and education background," Lee said.

And that is why QQ will win, he said.

Innovation critical to banking industry

By Zhao Hongyi

A market survey warns that commercial banks must focus on financial product innovation if they want to achieve sustainable growth and a presence on the world market.

The report was issued by Roland Berger, a French consultancy that is expanding its China operations after a decade of dormancy.

The report cited the nation's 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), which emphasizes the need for complete marketization of financial banks and moderate financial policy in the period.

"This gives a direction for Chinese banks and other financial institutions to develop," said Kang Yan, a Roland Berger partner and vice president of Greater China. "This requires commercial banks to offer different financial products to be competitive."

Another critical point in developing this industry is ensuring management has clear financial product responsibility.

The report said commercial banks should focus on the profit-loss of each financial product, strengthen ties between their branches and headquarters, develop new products for the market and build a product-oriented management team.

China's banking industry has gained considerable profits over the past decades thanks to continued economic prosperity.

But rapid inflation – as much as 8 percent last year – and property speculation have forced the central bank to raise the deposit-to-reserve ratio to 17 percent. With interest rates of 5 percent and financial institutions prevented from issuing credit to investors and property speculators, the banks are struggling to expand.

To compensate for the loss, many commercial banks are creating fees for services they used to offer for free. The move has been condemned by both clients and the media.

"The report named many critical issues facing the Chinese banking industry," said Liu Yangxin, financial professor of the University of International Business and Economics. "It also gave some useful suggestions to overcome these difficulties."

The debate over whether to allow more private capital into the industry and whether to expand further into the overseas market continues.

Roland Berger has been in China for a decade and has been trying to appear as an active voice in the market. It maintains offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei and Hong Kong.

Related China's most popular websites

Baidu

Baidu is one of the country's most popular search engines. It was founded in 2000 by Robin Li and Eric Xu, and was the first Chinese company to be included in the NASDAQ-100 index.

QQ

Launched in 1999, QQ was originally called OICQ and based on the then popular ICQ instant messaging protocol. Today it is an independent product with more than 300 million users. It provides users with ringtones, games and chat functions.

Sina

The largest infotainment Web portal in China, Sina is based in Shanghai and offers users an array of news stories, showbiz gossip, photographs and forums. It has a large following in North American Chinese communities and receives 3 billion page views per day.

Taobao

The site is the forerunner of the country's e-commerce industry. Owned by Alibaba group, it has more than 190 million registered users who bid on items or buy

them directly from sellers using an escrow service called Alipay. The site sells everything from mosquito nets to brand-name fashion.

Renren

Renren is a social networking site that began as Xiaonei.com in 2005. It was founded by Wang Xing, who also launched the Twitter clone Fanfou. The site has 160 million registered users.

Douban

Its name means watercress, but the site has nothing to do with vegetables. It is a Web 2.0 community in which users

discuss and recommend books, films, music and fashion.

Youku

Youku is a video hosting site. It rakes in 200 million yuan per year in gross profit, and in October 2009 viewers spent 229 million hours watching it.

Tudou

Another popular Chinese website with a vegetable name, Tudou is a video sharing site. It was founded in 2005 by Gary Wang. In September 2008, Tudou added an HD function called Heidou, or black bean.

Chinese buying abroad a global threat?

By Zhao Hongyi

Huang Nubo didn't expect so much controversy after his Zhongkun Investment Group purchased 300 square kilometers in Iceland for eco-tourism.

Zhongkun offered 1 billion Norwegian krona (\$8.8 million) two years ago, when the Icelandic government was bankrupt, for land in the northeast of the country.

Zhongkun plans to build a luxury hotel and eco-resort to attract potential wealthy Chinese who are becoming aware of environmental protection.

The project requires a further 20 billion krona.

But the deal raised red flags in foreign media, which said the project was linked to the Chinese government since Huang used to be a high-level official in the ministries of construction and information.

Iceland is also a member of the European Union, which restricts its member states from selling land to non-EU citizens.

"It's a strategic foothold for China in Iceland," a BBC reporter wrote.

Zhongkun said over the weekend that he is not purchasing the land, but rather, cooperating with the local government to develop the land for eco-tourism.

"I stand here to clarify that the project has no other purpose," Huang said this week. "It's a commercial and environmental project."

The project will link up Vatnajokull and Jokulsargljufur national parks as part of the company's "emphasis on nature conservation and environment tourism," according to Iceland's foreign ministry.

Icelandic president Olafur Ragnar Grimsson said they will discuss the project further, but that the country still welcomes it.

"I received more Chinese delegations here (in Rekjavik) in the past 10 years than from the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain combined," he said.

"The Chinese and Indians are cooperative and constructive when we are facing difficulties. But where are the British, French and Americans?"



Comment

Nothing to fear

There is no reason to get hysterical just because one Chinese man wants to buy some land and invest in tourism in Iceland. Foreigners already own quite a bit of land here, and I don't think there is anything to fear from that.

We accepted 26 similar deals to develop the local economy with foreign partners. Only one project has been rejected since 2007. The core issue is whether the project is in line with our policies. It has nothing to do with nationality.

— Katrin Juliusdottir, Icelander

We need to be cautious

We need to be cautious about the long-term implications of Icelandic territory entering foreign hands. The land

could give China future access to deep sea ports in the area.

We're facing the fact that a foreign tycoon wants to buy 300 square kilometers of Icelandic land. This has to be discussed and accepted at face value. Iceland needs to learn its lesson from the banking crisis and listen to those people cautioning against accepting any investment offered.

— Ogmundur Jonasson, Icelander

The Chinese government is extending itself

China is laying its pieces around the world. Think about China's recent purchase of ports in Greece and Pakistan, and oil wells in Canada. Iceland must be part of the initiative. As the world becomes warmer, the northern Atlantic

is expected to become a sea route. China is occupying these strategically important sites for its future.

— Romano Hansblik, senior editor, Washington DC

Get used to it

The world has yet to get used to seeing so many Chinese investors expanding around the world, seeking potential investment projects. It's better to calm down and think it over. How did China get so wealthy over 30 years? And for those hurling accusations: what would you do in this situation?

Huang used to be an official, but does that have anything to do with his project in the middle of the northern Atlantic?

— Wang Jun, professor of social sciences, Peking University

Courses teach kids integrity

By Huang Daohen

Children in Jinan, Shandong Province have more to learn this semester. Local education officials have compiled a textbook to teach them how to deny bribes.

The book, *Select Readings on Integrity*, uses real example of officials brought down by corruption, such as Zheng Xiaoyu, former chief of the State Food and Drug Administration. Zheng was executed in 2007 for taking bribes.

Local educators say the text is designed to help shape moral standards. Students at all levels in Jinan are required to take at least 18 classes each semester, according to local media.

Parents expressed doubts about the new course.

Comment

Depressing news

I cannot help feeling a bit depressed by this story. School and campus life should be a time to learn as well as to relax, maybe find a hobby, read books and catch up with friends. When I was in primary school, there wasn't this much to learn.

But now, a whole generation of youth is pressed to learn way too much. It is just too bleak, and I wonder about the future of this generation.

— Jeffery, 37,

American college teacher

Cheating is worse

Aside from teaching students not to take bribes, maybe schools and educa-

tors should try to start by teaching students the importance of doing their own homework.

As far as I know, students make extra bucks by doing others' homework for a fee. If that goes on, today's cheaters will become tomorrow's corrupt officials.

— Lillian Chen, 31, media manager

Make officials take the course

I wonder about the effectiveness of such integrity courses. Children have no idea what corruption is. How can you teach them about integrity through a textbook? Instead, integrity education should be taught to those who possess power and hold high adminis-

trative positions.

This is a waste of money and time.

— Zhang Wei, 29, a father

Teach them while they're young

Corruption should never be tolerated. Anti-corruption education is of great importance to both the country and its people. I support such courses, which will help children shape moral standards. As an old Chinese saying goes, a person's personality will be decided before he turns six. Therefore, morals and ethics education should be taught as early as possible.

— Ren Xianwen, 62, local resident

Old Beijing photos make experts out of longtime expats



Camels walk in front of Qianmen Train Station 1915.



Beijing with Ford automobiles in the late 1920s.



Qianmen Jianlou as seen from the northeast in the 1930s.



Changan Avenue in the 1960s with its first generation of red flags.



Tian'anmen Square in 1975

By Wei Xi

They are foreigners, but they are also experts on Old Beijing. In a reversal of expectations, it is a group of Chinese youth who are sitting quietly while foreigners tell stories of Beijing's changes over the past 100 years.



Simon Gjeroe



Lars Ulrik Thom

Beijing's changing roads

Pointing to an old photo of the Yongdingmen area, Lars Ulrik Thom from Denmark, who prefers to be known as Old Wu, asked a young Chinese in the audience, "Can you find anything strange in the photo?"

The girl looked and looked, then answered meekly, "Pedestrians are walking in the middle of the road while carts are on the sides?"

"Yes!" Wu said. "Why was that? It is very different from what we see on roads today."

He explained that during the late Qing Dynasty (1616-1911), cart carriers were of lower classes, and the middle of the road was always left for pedestrians, sedan chairs and cars.

Roads, Wu said, are best at presenting in Beijing's change over the last century. There weren't that many of them back then, and people who wanted to get from one side of town to the other had to walk outside the walls of the massive imperial palace.

"Therefore, it wasn't too convenient to move around Beijing back then," said Wu, who chose his Chinese name after a Qing general, Wu Sangui. "That's why Beijing was called a walking city."

Another reason for the inconvenience is that city gates often closed at night, preventing people on the outside from going in.

"There were more than 1,200 gates at that time, and each gate had its own function," Wu said. "For example, carts that carried coal were pulled through Fuchengmen. Dongzhimen was used for wooden carts, Chaoyangmen was used for food carts and Qianmen was only for the emperor's carriage."

Shortly after the Qing Dynasty was overthrown, many walls of the imperial palace were torn down and many roads were added. Common residents no longer needed to walk out of their way to get across the city center or between the inner and outer cities.

"The gates once played a critical role in people's daily lives, but now they stand quietly beside the roads and watch as people and cars go by without even noticing them," Wu said.

The life of old photo collectors

Wu learned the history of Old Beijing from local residents after showing them pictures he and Simon Rom Gjeroe have collected over the past seven years.

It was Gjeroe, a 37-year-old from Denmark, who came up with the idea of collecting old photos

10 years ago. Gjeroe had lived in China for 10 years, with eight of them in Beijing.

"The collecting of old photos started one day about 10 years ago when I stumbled upon some really nice old family shots in an antique shop in Pingyao, Shanxi Province," he said.

Since then, the collection has continuously expanded. He has focused down on pictures of Old Beijing.

Seven years ago, he met Wu in Beijing, and the two bonded thanks to their fascination with history.

"The development of the city is so fast, it makes it great to see photos of the old city and compare it with today," Gjeroe said. "You can learn so much about how life was here in the capital 70 to 120 years ago."

Most of the photos were taken by foreigners many decades years ago, while some were obtained at auctions, some from missionaries and some from flea markets like Panjiayuan, Wu said.

Dongcheng District Library Beijing City archives. They also interview Beijingers and experts for knowledge and memories of Beijing.

Yuan Shusen, writer of *The Going Out of Beijing* (Beijing De Chuxing), Luo Wenyou, owner of a Beijing automobile museum in Huairou, and Zhang Xiande, 86-year-old artist and student of renowned Chinese artist Xu Beihong, have all contributed to Beijing Postcards.

One thing Wu remembered clearly was a story told by Zhang, who lived in Beijing as a child, then left. When he returned at age 18, he drew all of Beijing's old gates.

Zhang said the area outside Andingmen used to be a place to collect feces, later processed into night soil. Because people living in the northern part of Beijing were often wealthier than southern residents, their feces contained more nutrition than that of the southern residents and fetched a higher price.

"Zhang also told me that fertilizer made from feces had once been transported to the US," Wu said, laughing.

"The gates once played an irreplaceable role in people's daily lives, but now they stand quietly beside the roads and watch as people and cars go by without even noticing them."

Five years ago, as the two men were studying a number of old photos from Gjeroe's collection, an idea struck them: why not use these photos for something more? That's when they decided to make black-and-white postcards from the photos and attach an interesting related story to each.

This was in 2006, the year Beijing Postcards opened.

They printed 37,000 postcards that year and have since produced many more, and now have 160 different kinds of postcards with a picture of art or architecture from old Beijing, China or Shanghai.

"That is also what we can give to people living or traveling in Beijing: A piece of living history, a great story about understanding the history of the city and relating it to the present," Gjeroe said.

From time to time, Wu and Gjeroe hold photo exhibitions and talk about certain aspects of Old Beijing. Their latest exhibition opened Monday.

In order to find reliable information, Wu and Gjeroe frequently visit local libraries and archives like

Eager for knowledge

"The first time I saw Old Wu, I was so astonished to see he speaks such fluent Chinese," said Zhang Wei, founder of oldbeijing.net.

But it would be Wu's collection that impressed Zhang more.

Zhang has collected more than 20,000 old photos of Beijing, Shanghai and other cities. All are photos he has collected through the Internet.

Every time Wu would be unsure where an old photo was taken, he would turn to Zhang.

"Although I have a much larger collection of old photos than they do, I am moved by their behavior," Zhang said. "They are so obsessed with the culture and history of Beijing, and much more rigorous than many Chinese."

Zhang said Wu would keep asking why and how when facing a question, until he understood thoroughly.

Zhang also praised the photo exhibitions and the talks Wu and Gjeroe have done. He said he believes it's a very good way to present Beijing culture to the world.

"Nowadays, we Chinese are satisfied even though we only know a little," he said. "Foreigners like Wu are different. Everything around them is attractive."

Wu said life in Denmark is too steady, but China is full of challenges and excitement because of its rapid development. New discoveries are made almost every day.

He believes history can be examined from different angles, leading to different conclusions. For him, though, the process of discovery is rewarding in and of itself.

EU chamber presents market position paper

By Zhao Hongyi

With China in its 12th Five-Year Plan for economic development, the European Union Chamber of Commerce in Beijing believes it can contribute to what China needs.

In the 12th annual European Business in China Position Paper, released yesterday, the chamber said it can help develop the service sector, optimize environmentally friendly technologies and encourage innovation.

The paper is an official document the chamber has prepared every year since 2000 to appeal to the Chinese government and advocate the benefits of European business in China.

The chamber is also giving suggestions to the EU and its member countries on how to improve bilateral ties with China to perfect the business environment in the country.

This year is the beginning of China's 12th Five-Year Plan, a strategic blueprint of the country's economic development. This blueprint appeals for upgraded technologies, ways of production, concepts of living and environmental protection.

The chamber emphasized in the paper that it can make a significant and positive contribution in the next five years within China's outlined plan.

For instance, European companies have advanced technologies for industrial upgrades, a sophisticated



The EU Chamber lists a number of recommendations to Chinese policymakers to improve investment.

Photo by Zhao Hongyi

service industry to develop in China and a history of innovation and green technologies that are in demand.

The chamber also listed a number of recommendations to Chinese policymakers to improve the investment, working and living environment in the country, like increasing market access, enhancing transparency and predictability in legislation, improving regulatory efficiency and encouraging innovation through intellectual property rights protection.

"We are ready to be a strong supporter of China and the Chinese government in developing the economy," Davide Cuccion, president of the chamber, said at a release ceremony yesterday.

This year, the chamber pre-

sented more than 600 recommendations in the paper to Chinese and European policymakers, including on bilateral commercial relations, such as loosening restrictions on joint venture shares in the financial and green technology industries.

It would also like more market access and a fair market environment for the competition of European companies against local counterparts.

"It has become increasingly challenging to operate in the Chinese market," Cuccion said.

The chamber will submit the paper to EU headquarters and launch it in 12 EU member countries, and also in cities such as Rome, Paris, London and Brussels.

Foreign embassies support Beijing design galaxy

By Chu Meng

London will be the first city of honor at Beijing Design Week and the inaugural Beijing International Design Triennial events that open September 26, said Joanna Margaret Burke, the Counselor of Culture from the British Embassy, at a press conference Tuesday.

The Dutch embassy also introduced their representative designs, exhibitions and workshops that are coming to Beijing. Among foreign countries, Denmark has the second most items at Design Week and the triennial.

Themed "London-Beijing Design Express" and hosted by the British Embassy, the activities will be held at China Millennium Monument, Dashilar Historic Alley and 751 Design Park.

"Our core spirit for the design week and the triennial will be 'London-Calling,'" named after an album by The Clash, Burke said. "Also, it coheres with the spirit of the London 2012 Olympic Games. Our participation is also a preview of that grand event next year."

London's series of design events will reflect local design excellence, such as in the exhibition London-Beijing: Cross-Cultural Design Express. Designs are optimized for places such as Tian'anmen Square and Dashilar Hutong.

Eric Chen, the directing curator of Beijing Design Week and the triennial, said one design

city will be invited every year to participate in the event, with the aim of enhancing cultural exchange between Beijing and international cities.

The Netherlands will also launch a pavilion called "Dutch Design Generator" in order to express the country's productive design industry and fruitful achievements.

"Generator" is much more accurate than "pavilion" to convey an idea of dynamic conditions," said Christine de Baan, from the Dutch Embassy. "It is not about things finished yesterday and scheduled for tomorrow. Rather, it is a continual and sustainable process."

Kock said exhibitions will include something about the utilization of LED lights in food and health, a book lounge and mini cinema.

The triennial's opening ceremony will be held at the National Museum of China, with a theme focusing on the notion of caring for others. Five separate sub-themes are also identified: creative junctions, rethinking bamboo, reason design emotion, good guys and "what if."

Beijing Design Week and the Triennial are hosted by the ministries of culture and education, the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and Beijing Municipal Government.

Not just a feast

Calendar Restaurant explores connection between food and life

By Annie Wei

Not long after this year's Country Fair in Beijing was declared a success by Weibo users everywhere, photos of another interesting dining concept popped up online and got everyone abuzz.

A photo was posted showing a group of young, free-spirited people cooking and dining together at a courtyard. But this was at no regular restaurant.

Calendar Restaurant is open only once a month, and those who want to partake in its cook-out need to apply ahead of time for a seat. Everyone chips in with the cooking, then they all dine together over lively conversation.

It's more like a home party, but participants don't need to know the organizers. Instead, they invite themselves.

Founders

The concept of Calendar Restaurant was started by Uemura Emi, 32, the Japanese co-founder of Country Fair in Beijing, and Fang Danmin, 34, a local magazine editor.

Uemura was majoring in anthropology in Canada when she began cooking, while Fang has strong interests in China's new countryside constructions.

Influenced by Wen Tiejun, a leading professor of China's rural issues, and Shi Yan, founder of Little Donkey Farm, a community-supported agricultural farm, Fang sought to rent land and needed a partner.

Uemura, who had experience farming in Hokkaido before moving to Beijing at the end of 2009, was just in the process of finding a place to do some farming.

Through a mutual friend, the two women connected.

Before launching Calendar Restaurant in a hutong courtyard in June, Uemura envisioned the project to be an artistic relationship between food and lifestyle. Uemura began pursuing that project at Vitamin Space in Caochangdi last September.

The original idea

Back in Canada, Uemura founded a bakery and worked in the food industry. She worked at a farmer's market there and was interested in workshops involved with food and art.

The idea she instituted at Caochangdi was a place where people could order food that would be grown on the spot. It would, of course, take three months, but diners could watch their greens and sprouts flourish in the restaurant's yard.

The purpose of dining in the restaurant would be shifted from the meal itself to the relationship between people and their food.

The idea didn't work as Uemura planned. Items on the menu such as snow pea mint and cucumbers failed to grow in a timely manner, she said. Part of the reason was timing: she kicked off the restaurant in September. "I didn't know that all outdoor vegetables die in Beijing in December," she said.

But people who took part in her project were not disappointed. "Actually, I found they really enjoyed the concept," she said.



Calendar Restaurant in a hutong



A weatherman was invited to talk about why there was so much rain in July.



Participants cooking together



A former courtyard janitor was invited to cook last month.

Moving downtown

The Calendar project in Caochangdi was also limited because the only participants seemed to be artists living in the area. Uemura wanted to involve a wider circle of people.

After she joined a shared work and life space founded by Elaine W. Ho in a hutong courtyard, she and her friend, Fang Danmin, decided to re-open Calendar Restaurant.

"People like us, who work in the city but actually spend time

farming on weekends for fun, have special feelings toward vegetables," Fang said. Unlike real farmers who farm to survive, Fang and Uemura feel that land and vegetables are "like our babies," Fang said.

They feel that food should be seasonal, just as vegetables are.

"That's the meaning of our restaurant's name – every vegetable has its own calendar," Fang said.

The restaurant is a way for them to "communicate with the outside

surroundings," Uemura said.

Slowing down

After Fang posted photos of the first Calendar Restaurant event, mainly a gathering of their friends, she got calls from people who wanted to make reservations for dinner.

"It's not what we want. We are not just a restaurant," Fang said.

The founders hope participants understand their goals and share their appreciation for food. It's not about fast consumption.

And their restaurant's rule is "please don't come if you just want a feast. Come if you want to hear stories and learn from others."

"People in China grab things really fast but leave quickly," Uemura said. And there is no commitment to the community.

After three Calendar Restaurant events, the founders learned that Weibo has spread their restaurant's message far and wide.

Fang began thinking more critically about their project.

"We thought maybe we didn't approach our agenda the right way and we should improve the way we communicate with the outside world," Fang said.

Finding a right topic or theme was the key to a successful event.

At the second event, they decided to invite an analyst from the China Meteorological Administration to explain why there was so much rain in July compared to previous years, a topic of concern for those interested in agriculture. They also invited a Mongolian woman who is studying organic technology in Japan. Neighbors partook in the meal.

Each event, Uemura does a lot of cooking, but they've begun inviting rotating chefs. At the last event, the chef was a retired man surnamed Ge who used to look after the Calendar Restaurant's courtyard.

"Many plants here were planted by him," Fang said. "It was an meaningful experience."

People interested can contact the founders through their Sina Weibo account: [rilicanting](#).

Event

Visit a coal mine

Coal mining used to be a major industry in Beijing in the 1980s, and there are still some coal mines in remote Mentougou District. The large and interesting coal mines may help you picture what Old Beijing looked like and how workers used to live. A tour will take you inside a coal mine and show you how the equipment works, how to transport coal with mini electrical trains and what happens to coal after it's mined.

The coal mines are 40 kilometers from downtown Beijing. Take Subway Line 1 to Pingguoyuan station, where the tour meets. The mines are a 70-minute bus ride away via Bus 929 from Pingguoyuan.

Where: Coal mine, Mentougou District

When: Today, 1:30-6:30 pm

Email: beijing1984@gmail.com

Cost: Free

Wine class on ports

Attention wine lovers! Tonight we are taking a trip with European port wine, food and chocolate. In particular we will talk about the most famous Portuguese wine: port, well known in Portugal for centuries.

Where: Unit 5A, Qihua Tower, 1375 Huaihai Lu, Xicheng District

When: Today, 7:30 pm

Tel: 18721915223

Cost: 100 yuan (including two kinds of port)

Camp on Great Wall

As summer winds down, Beijing's countrysides are turning into lovely destinations again for professionals eager to escape their urban lives. The Lakeside Great Wall makes for an excellent destination. The trip is supported by US Alumni Society and will include a barbecue, campfire and good company. You will also have a clear view of the moon and stars at night. If you are in Beijing and feel like having a relaxing weekend with interesting people, come and join us!

Where: Great Wall at Huanghuacheng

When: September 10-11

Tel: 8530 6217

Cost: 600 yuan for members and 700 yuan for non-members

Cooking classes every Saturday

The Hutong, a cultural exchange center and retreat for foreigners and locals to meet and connect in the center of the capital, is holding Chinese and other Asian cooking classes every Saturday. You can eat all the dishes after the class.

Where: 1 Jiudawan Zhongxiang, Shiqie Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: Every Saturday, 2-4 pm

Tel: 15901046127

Cost: 240 yuan (including all cooking materials)

By Wei Xi

Libraries in town

By Wei Xi

Expats living in Beijing may often wonder where they can find a library that has a wide selection of English or other foreign-language books and magazines, or relevant policies for public library use. *Beijing Today*, at your service, has found these answers.

National Library

The National Library is a state institution and has a collection of 3,501,431 foreign-language books and 6,607,204 foreign-language magazines (as of 2009), including works in English, French, German, Japanese and Russian. However, books are not allowed to be taken out of the library.

Where: 33 Zhongguancun Nan Dajie, Haidian District

Open: 9 am - 9 pm (9 am - 5 pm during weekends and holidays)

Tel: 8854 5243

Website: nlc.gov.cn

Capital Library

Although Capital Library has

a smaller selection of foreign-language books than the National Library, it offers customers the option of borrowing. All you need is to apply for a card and pay a 500 yuan deposit.

Where: 88 Dongsanhu Nan Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 9 am - 7:30 pm
Tel: 6735 8114, 6735 8115
Website: clcn.net.cn

The Bookworm

A well-known bookstore, library, bar and cafe where one can find the latest English books and magazines. The prices are only slightly marked up for imported items. It offers a nice rooftop terrace and comfortable couches for reading.

Where: Building 4, Nan Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 8 am - 8 pm from Mondays to Saturdays, 8 am - 5 pm on Sundays

Tel: 6431 2108

Web: chinabookworm.com

Funfunreading Library

This is a community library

for children and teens, and features a wide variety of English and French novels and storybooks. Customers are also able to find texts and audio books for teaching children about phonics, spelling, reading and grammar. From time to time, Funfunreading will hold public activities like reading, storytelling, handiworks, and so on.

Where: Unit 1603, Building 3, Block A, Sanlihe Er Qu, Xicheng District
Open: Tuesday to Sunday,

noon - 6 pm
Tel: 5715 3348

Shijingshan District Library

Foreign-language books or magazines are not allowed to be taken out of the library.

Where: 2 Bajiao Nan Lu, Shijingshan District
Open: 9 am - 5 pm
Tel: 6887 8503

Chaoyang District Library

It only has a limited selection of foreign-language books, but they are available for borrowing with a card and 200 yuan deposit.

Where: 17 Xiaozhuang Jintai Lu, Chaoyangmen Wai, Chaoyang District
Open: 9 am - 7 pm
Tel: 8599 1055

Scholastic Children's Library

It is also a library providing English books to young children.

Where: 1B1-35-37 Solana, 1 Nonzhanquan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 9 am - 6 pm from Wednesday to Friday, 9 am - 7 pm weekends
Tel: 5905 6377

Policies for expats regarding public libraries

In Beijing, expats enjoy the same rights as locals who want to read or borrow books from libraries. All they need to do is apply for a card with their passport.

Different libraries offer different kinds of cards and have different restrictions on how they may be used, such as how many books can be taken out of the library at once.

The National Library prevents any books to be taken out of the library, while most others allow Chinese books and magazine to be borrowed as long as a deposit is paid in advance. Overdue books carry a fine.

Libraries like Capital Library and Chaoyang District Library have many different kinds of borrower's cards. Some cards only allow one to check out Chinese books and magazines. There are five different levels of cards at Capital Library, so ask a librarian for more details.

It usually takes only a few minutes to apply for a card, but processing can take an hour or two.

New route to Badaling now open

By Zhang Dongya

Drivers headed for the Badaling Great Wall from the Beijing-Tibet Expressway now have a new route they can take to bypass traffic.

Since September 1, a former road that passes through Badaling has been sealed up. It will be revamped for tourism purposes and to decrease traffic.

A new road, meanwhile, has opened. Construction on the road began in 2007. It's 7.27 kilometers long and includes two tunnels and one bridge. It starts at Badaling forestry center in the east and passes through Qinglongqiao Tunnel and Tanyugou Tunnel. It rejoins the highway after that and ends at the entrance of Yingchengzi Village. Scenic sites like the Great Wall and Wildlife Zoo are along the way.

The Qinglongqiao Tunnel has two lanes for vehicles going in and out. There is also a

pedestrian lane and escape lane for vehicles, with huge vents on the ceiling.

The tunnel has no sudden turns. The speed limit is 40 kilometers per hour.

Previously, it took at least half an hour to get out of the Badaling Great Wall scenic section. With this new route, transportation officials estimate it'll take 10 minutes.

During rush hour, people can take this new route to Juyong Pass, also bypassing the 10-yuan toll on the Beijing-Tibet Expressway.

Tourists heading for Badaling from the west can park their car at Guntiangu, Heilongtan or Chadaoxi parking lots, then transfer to a bus. Those who want to enter from the east can park at Badaling Linchang parking lot and walk to the scenic spot.

The new road also passes through Shuiguan (Water Pass) Great Wall and the ski resort, which is expected to bring more visitors.



A new route to Badaling helps alleviate traffic.

Photo provided by Beijing Youth

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Language of the body

By He Jianwei

Unlike other art forms, performance art is usually described as violent, sexual and bloody. Its performers are often seen as strange for their decision to wield their own bodies as a tool.

While it's true that some artists' extreme acts challenge people's morals, many use their bodies like a poem to create "romantic" and "warm" works.

In the past 10 years, Liu Chengrui's creations have varied from self-mutilation to a lifetime promise to his children. He treats life as a gift and art as a force that can make it better.

Liu sees a dark, thin man who walks the street in straight lines and makes only 90- or 180-degree turns. The actions are part of *Possibly 48 Dogs*, his new project that began Jane 22 last Saturday night, the first young people walking in the Fugang Hutong to continue his work.

Not a creature of habit, and Liu is trying to change the habits that determine how life walks. He's trying to see how long it takes to become one. Liu has been painting and collecting new hair every 10 years since 1985 in a small town in Qinghai Province, and studied oil painting at Qinghai Normal University.

His experience with performance art goes back to 1995, when during one extreme example he chopped off the pinky finger of his left hand. It went as a need because he felt there was something "imperfect" in his spirit. Liu's past performance was part of a greater game of reading books and magazines at the "proletariat library."

I realized that what I did before was close to real performance art, he said. I had not discovered the art, I would have gone to the book store and I would have opened the book," Liu said. "I think there are some faint traces of his personal life in his works.

His history is staunch environmentalist appeared in one piece, in which he turned disposable chopsticks and empty soda cans into a big ball that he attacked and smashed and there was nothing left.

"I was attracted by this artistic language. It's a way to express an artist's ideas directly and to have a deep impression on the audience," he said.

"It is not possible for a performance artist to become as wealthy as other contemporary artists. Even if he becomes famous, it does not mean he has a discussion about what good performance art is, should no other others," Liu said.

In March 2010, he began a performance piece called *Looking for My Lost Finger*. Liu sat his finger in Mexico in 2008 in Mexico. The more it hurt him, the more he liked it. That became it for three years and it was not the anger that I lost my finger, he said.

He posted an ad on the Internet asking readers, hope his friends, neighbors and his little tiger to come to his exhibition. Please send it to me if you find it," he said.

Soon he received many messages. Some expressed their regrets and others told their own stories about losing important things.

"One person offered to cut this own finger and send it to me," he said.

"I hope people are aware of what is predicted to happen and that they lose it my way," he said. "I would like someone else becoming injured, I would stop the project, because his work is rarely popular, but it interests me that it can have selling my work and it never loses me to have no money to continue my work, guess I'll take a part-time job," he said.

"I was attracted by this artistic language. It's a way to express an artist's ideas directly and to leave a deep impression on the audience."

13

Center stage

By He Jianwei

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13



Liu Chengrui, 48, promised his 82 students in Qinghai Province they will meet again in 10 years.



In *Possibly 48 Days*, Liu Chengrui kept his promise in straight lines and made only 90- or 180-degree turns.



Pulse, an installation from We Have the Same Background



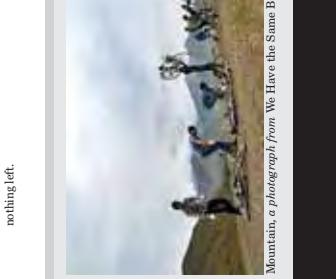
Liu uses blue cotton as a record in *Possibly 48 Days*.



Liu uses blue cotton as a record in *Possibly 48 Days*.



Mountain, a photograph from We Have the Same Background



Mountain, a photograph from We Have the Same Background

BEIJING TODAY Editor: He Jianwei Designer: Deng Ning

BEIJING TODAY Editor: He Jianwei Designer: Deng Ning

The Netherlands is the country of honor at this year's Beijing International Book Fair. More than 30 Dutch novelists, poets, authors of non-fiction and writers of children's books attended the fair from September 1 to 4.

Dutch Princess encourages parents to learn from children

By Chu Meng

Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands, author of one of the bestselling children's comic in Europe, called on Chinese parents to educate their children about the environment at Beijing International Book Fair last Friday.

The Princess, a UNESCO envoy for literacy and an environmentalist, began creating the *Mr. Finney* comic series in 2008 with Sieb Posthuma, one of her country's most successful illustrators.

The stories explain environmental protection issues using interesting and easily-understood parables geared to children five or younger. Each is inspired by an ongoing, real-world environmental struggle.

The series' bestsellers are *Mr. Finney and the World Turned Upside Down*, published in 2009, and *Mr. Finney and the Other Side of the Water*, published last month.

The princess brought the former, which was translated into Chinese and published by 21st Century Publishing House, to the book fair.

She also called on parents to "read together" with their children, a process she called "reverse education," to encourage adults to take a more serious look at long-ignored environmental problems described in the pages of *Mr. Finney*.

"What we do now affects our common

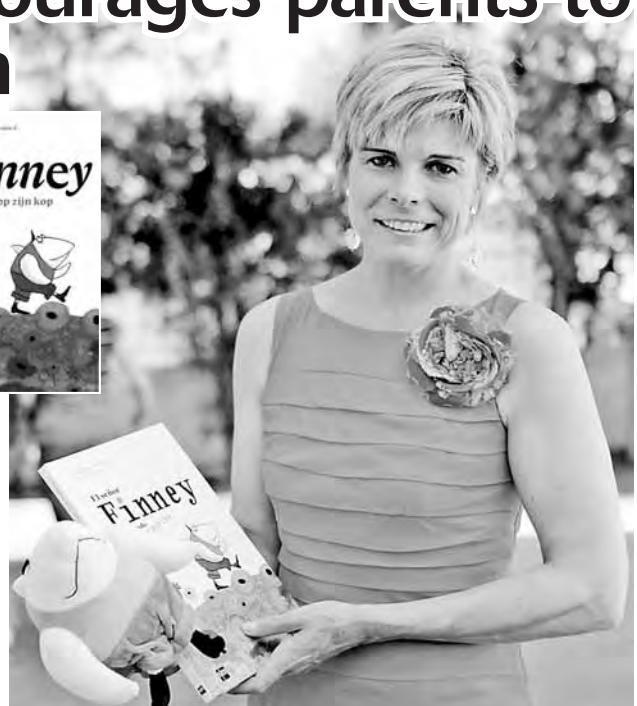
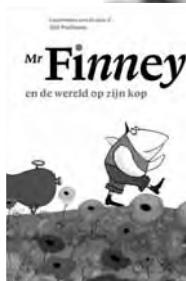
future. We all have a role to play, and people from different generations can learn from each other. Children and young people ask pertinent questions and think in terms of possibilities, not obstacles," the princess said.

A dialogue across generations can help change the mindsets of decision-makers, as well as empower young people to think sustainably and responsibly from an early age, she said.

Twenty Dutch writers and 16 publishers brought the country's literature to the fair. Most were attending for the first time, but all were eager to expand literary ties and tap into the huge potential of the Chinese market.

The Netherlands is famous for producing some of the world's most popular comic strips and illustrations, the princess said. "They are humorous ways to turn dark problems from the real world into more understandable forms."

The Dutch Pavilion, called "Open Landscape, Open Book," was designed as a graphical journey through Dutch literature. Visitors could explore the country's literary landscape through vivid illustrations and titles both old and new.



Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands introduced her *Mr. Finney* comic series to Chinese audience

Photos provided by Dutch Embassy in Beijing

Geerk Mak calls for tolerance, unity in Europe

By Chu Meng

The divisions between nations are growing vague as people accept a broader, ultra-union on the European continent, Geerk Mak said at the book release of *In Europe* at Beijing Normal University last Sunday.

Mak, born in 1946, is a Dutch journalist and historian. His 10 books written during the past 15 years about Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Europe have won him a worldwide following.

In Europe, his best known book, was published in Dutch in 2004. The book, now translated to more than a dozen languages, combines a travelogue of Europe with a history of the 20th-century.

In 1999, Mak made a one-year trip across the continent to trace the history of 20th century

Europe from Verdun to Berlin, Saint Petersburg to Auschwitz and Kiev to Srebrenica. Along his travels he recorded historical touchstones and the stories of people he encountered to learn about the real conditions of Europe at the dawn of the new millennium.

In Europe's Chinese version was released at the Beijing International Book Fair last week.

Mak identified himself as "a staunch defender of the values of an open and tolerant society of the European Union" in his book launch in the university.

He compared China with Europe when emphasizing the importance of self-unification to survive economic and political globalization.

"Europe has a lot of nations that have a long history of

division and competition. But more and more of these nation-states are giving up a part of their sovereignty to support the common interests of the European Union," he said.

He compared it to the situation in China, where many minority groups and regions are expected to put aside the individual for the sake of common development and national unification.

"The world, including China, needs a more unified European Union that can overcome its historical conflicts and cultural diversity," he said.

Mak's journalistic writing and rich historic knowledge make *In Europe* a compelling record of his journey.

As a traveler, he spoke to hundreds of people, including

prominent figures like Richard von Weizsäcker, Ruud Lubbers and the grandson of Kaiser Wilhelm II. He also read many diaries, including a dramatic account of Victor Klemperer's life, the newspaper of the International Exhibition in Paris in 1900 and the memoirs of soldiers who served in the trenches at the Battle of Flanders.

Mak combines the larger trip journal and historical recordings of 20th-century Europe with details that give the continent's old days a face, a taste and a smell.

"I hope *In Europe* can help Europeans discover the past that unites them and gives them the common identity. And at the same time, I hope it gives hope to countries who are struggling with unification," he said.



Geerk Mak

Neuroscientist's book says nature wins out over nurture

By Han Manman

For the past several decades, the old argument of nature versus nurture has tipped to the nurture side — the belief that all of a child's failings can be blamed on its parents and society.

But Dick Swaab's new best-selling book *We Are Our Brains* (*Wij zijn ons Brein*) presents striking evidence to the contrary.

Swaab says that the time a human spends in the womb determines the main characteristics for the rest of its life.

"All that we are, and all the ailments that will affect our brains, are lodged in our neurons long before we are born," said Swaab at the Beijing International Book Fair.

"Approximately 20 percent of what and how we are is learned in the earliest years of our being. The other 80 percent is what we inherit from our ancestors," Swaab said.

That these percentages could change over time is essentially impossible, he said.

In his new book, Swaab said a child's brain development is influenced in the

womb by hormones and its mother's stress, as well as by any medications, alcohol and nicotine she consumes.

We Are Our Brains is the latest entry in Swaab's controversial catalog.

Swaab previously made headlines when he found that the biological clock of homosexual men is twice as long as that of heterosexual men, and he received death threats from radical feminists when he said women's brains were different from men's.

"We were getting phone calls day and night; there

were people threatening us with bombs, and there were mailed death threats and demonstrations in front of my house," he said.

But Swaab is not one to shy from controversy. He has continued to publish his findings and scientifically-based views.

Swaab is a professor emeritus of neurobiology at the University of Amsterdam. For 30 years, he was the director of the Netherlands Institute for Brain Research.

His work on sex differences in the brain has brought him international fame.



Dick Swaab

New look for old furniture

By He Jianwei

Although several leading contemporary artists, such as Wang Jianwei and Song Dong, have made installations using secondhand furniture from the 1970s, Liu Wei rejects the idea that his work is related to memory or the past.

Last Friday, he presented his latest solo exhibition: a two-year ongoing project to design and rebuild secondhand furniture into Gothic structures. The creations are a reflection of how Liu sees reality: complex and chaotic.



Liu Wei

The scent of old wood wafts from Liu Wei's installations in *Myriad Beings*.

His new structures preserve the original green and yellow hues of their 1970s furniture building blocks.

"I love old furniture not because it is nostalgic, but because I like those colors," he said.

The main hall of Today Art Museum displays *Merely a Mistake*, an installation made of building debris like doors and window frames. He abandons the former functions of the materials and frames them into several huge wooden sculptures like Gothic buildings.

Four days before the exhibition, the hall looked like a construction site as Liu and the workers pieced together wood and steel. Because the exhibition area at Today Art Museum has more vertical space, he had to add to expand his sculptures from the base.

"I have a warehouse in my studio. The completed works take up one third of it and the rest is full of materials," he said. "Each time, I rebuild the materials into different forms."

Liu's studio is near the Huantie Art Zone, northeast of 798 Art Zone.

"If you check a map of Beijing, you can see a railway circle in the northeast corner. That's the Huantie Art Zone, where a group of artists live. But I'm not one of them, because I don't live inside the circle," he said.

Liu was born in Beijing in 1972 and moved with his family frequently. He had few friends as a child and seldom kept in contact with them, so he has little nostalgia for old homes and bygone days.

At 16, he left Beijing to study at the affiliated middle school of China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province. After four years there, he enrolled in the China Academy of Art.

After graduating, Liu returned to Beijing and worked as a graphic designer for a newspaper before becoming a full-time artist.

His first appearance in contemporary art was at a community exhibition in Shaoyaoju in 1999. Most of the artists at the exhibition had majored in painting, but all of them made videos or installations. Their work was characterized by its break from the tradition of creating works related to history. Liu said he believes that any work that can move its viewer is a good work.

Liu resigned from his design job in 2003 to work as an artist full time. His pieces began to sell a year earlier.

Liu's first work, sold to famous Swiss collector Uli Sigg, was a wooden installation more than 7 meters long. "He came to my studio, took a glance at my work and decided to buy it without a word," Liu said.

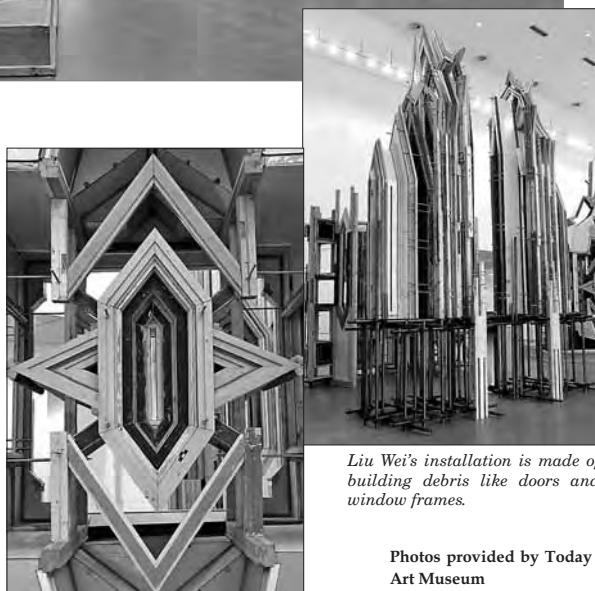
Sigg has not only discovered many nameless artists, but also founded the Chinese Contemporary Art Awards (CCA) to promote those with talent. Liu won the award in 2008 and soon became a hot artist.

Unlike other leading artists, Liu refuses to collaborate with fashion designers. "Art is not a commodity that should be sold to rich men," he said. "I do not think that is the way you help the public experience art."

To make art accessible to the public drives Liu to create his installations using cheap materials sourced at a secondhand furniture market near his studio.

The Today Art Museum is the third host of Liu's *Myriad Beings* after the Shanghai Biennale 2010 and Minsheng Art Museum this March.

"Art is not a commodity that should be sold to rich men. I do not think that is the way you help the public experience art."



Liu Wei's installation is made of building debris like doors and window frames.

Photos provided by Today Art Museum



Myriad Beings

– Liu Wei Solo Show

Where: Today Art Museum, 32 Baizhan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 10, 10 am – 5 pm

Admission: 20 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 5876 9804



By Wei Xi

Initial, a Hong Kong brand, opened its first Beijing store in Nanluogu Xiang on August 28, and its second store in Xidan on Monday. Both are fashion houses for men and women.

Initial explores unique and cutting-edge designs while trying to keep materials comfortable and styles simple.

Its philosophy is that fashion is an art of self-discovery. Therefore, Initial hopes what it makes is more of a culture and art work rather than a piece of clothing.

Young office workers are the target customers. They can find formal but fashionable sun-tops, T-shirts, trousers, duffle coats, suits and more, all by Hong Kong designers. Clothing prices vary from several hundred yuan to over 10,000 yuan.



In its other branches in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Wenzhou, Xiamen, Dalian and Guangzhou, Initial has cafes (Initial Café), furniture and living goods boutiques (Initial Lifestyle).

With furniture in vintage style, such as wooden floorboards, wardrobes, cupboards, shelves and tables, every Initial store itself is like a mini vintage museum. The new and old elements, straight and cross lines, precise and raw feelings in all the stores and shops, show Initial's unique aesthetic idea.

Every store is sprayed with a special perfume that has a light, juicy peach smell. The moment you step into Initial, you'll know where you are.



Beijing's Initial store



Initial's products for fall/winter 2011 will be available in town soon, prices to be decided.



Photos provided by Initial

Initial Fashion

Nanluogu Xiang branch
Where: 20 Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District
Open Time: noon – 10 pm
Tel: 6407 7978

Joy City branch

Where: 4F, Joy City, 31 Xidan Bei Dajie, Xicheng District
Open Time: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 5971 6176

Wuhao's pop-up store for Beijing Design Week



Wuhao has gathered products from 55 designers.



By Annie Wei

No matter how talented a designer may be, he or she can only produce a limited number of pieces every season.

It's why platforms that gather different designers' works are important: they give the public more choices and more appreciation of the industry as a whole.

Wuhao is one of those stores dedicated to showcasing multiple designers. Since it was established in a quiet Beijing hutong courtyard, it has been reputed among the city's picky shoppers as the go-to place for a nice shopping experience.

Founder Isabelle Pascal is a French woman who also worked in the creative industry back home. On her first visit to China in 2002, she was immediately captivated and decided to set up shop in China in 2007.

Pascal started working on Wuhao in early 2009, and the store was finally established early last year after she found a nice courtyard in central Beijing.

So far, Wuhao has gathered works from 55 designers. During the upcoming Beijing Design Week, Wuhao Curated Shop will go from its peaceful hutong courtyard to the bustling Dashila near Qianmen with a pop-up store called Wuhao@ The Teahouse.

"The teahouse will display an array of unique installations and lifestyle experiences," said Helene Fan from Wuhao. Everything on display will be for sale, from cutting-edge fashion to special tea products or just interesting toys.

Apart from exclusive products like furniture from designer Zhang Cheng and labels like Kiroic from Shanghai, there are also many affordable pieces with prices ranging from 10 to 500 yuan.

The pop-out store will be located in a former teahouse. As Wuhao has partnered with a tea company Tranquil Tuesday, the location will present a new vision of tradition. Tea tables, teacups and furniture are specially designed.



Scarf, price to be decided

Wuhao@ The Teahouse

Where: 9 Zhujia Hutong, Dashilar Xi Jie, Xicheng District
Open: September 16 – October 10
Wuhao

Where: 35 Mao'er Hutong, Dongcheng District
Open: RSVP
Tel: 6400 5435



Photos provided by Wuhao

Savor and save the wine



By Annie Wei

Wines are becoming popular gifts for Mid-Autumn Festival, but for glass-a-day drinkers, how does one save an already-opened bottle for later use?

Marc Fressange, CEO of Ouh La La France and Oh Marco Cellar Chain China, shared his tips, which could be useful for novice wine drinkers and lovers alike.

Everyone knows that pulling the cork on a bottle of wine marks a point of no return. Fressange said how the wine holds up depends on a number of factors, including, most important, the age of the wine.

"A young wine, say a growth claret of just five years of age, will benefit from exposure to the air at first," he said. "However, for very old wines, they might lose much of their character and bouquet within minutes of being opened."

Simple tips for saving wine at home

For most wine beginners, the refrigerator is the most common place to place already-opened wine, as the low temperature can slow chemical reactions.

You can keep a bottle of white or rose wine open in the fridge for three or four days and expect the taste to remain constant.

For red wines, Bordeaux especially, avoid refrigeration for more than one or two days. But Fressange said it's best not to keep them in the fridge because red wine's structure can be altered.

Simpler wines, like sole grape

variety shiraz or Merlot, can be kept for a couple of days in the fridge.

For great bottles or wines with complex structures like Bordeaux, it's best to keep them stored in a dry space at 15 to 20 C.

You can purchase vacuuming equipment (20 yuan) at most supermarkets and wine cellars. These are rubber bungs to insert into the bottle, which come with a simple pump to extract air.

For serious wine lovers, Fressange recommends a cylinder of compressed nitrogen (50 yuan). When the device extracts the air, it fills the bottle with nitrogen, keeping the wine fresh.

Try renting a cellar

Fressange's company rents out special cellars for wine storage.

As Oh Marco Cellar imports a large range of wines directly from France, it offers customers the ability to share their cellar space to guarantee optimal storage.

The storage is particularly good for Grands Crus, an expensive wine that requires perfect storage conditions, Fressange said.

The cellar makes sure that wines are kept at 16 C and 75 percent humidity. One must have at least six bottles. Rental costs 20 yuan per bottle per month for a minimum of six months.

When a customer needs his wine prepared for a special dinner or event, he can call up the cellar a day in advance and Oh Marco Cellar will deliver the wine free of charge within Third Ring Road.



Marc Fressange, CEO of Ouh La La France and Oh Marco Cellar Chain China



Inside Oh Marco Cellar



Oh Marco Cellar's front

CFP Photo

The cellar service is available at one of Oh Marco Cellar's many outlets, or via direct order at 5879 0210.

Oh Marco / Cafe du Centre

Institut Francais de l'ambassade de France, Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open:
8 am – 8 pm

Tel: 6553 2627

Oh Marco Cellar Fortune Mall

7 Dongsanhuai Zhong Lu, Chaoyang

District

Tel: 10 am – 8 pm

Oh Marco Jin Rong Jie (Oh Marco flagship store)

Where: 9 Jinchengfang Jie, Xicheng

District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6622 0566



Chicken curry Photos by Alice Chou

Beef satay (top) and coconut rice wrapped with banana leaf

rice and noodles as the staple.

Other classic Bruneian dishes include black rice pudding and Bak Kut Teh.

Malaysian restaurants in town Laobasha

Where: East of Building 20, Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 10:30 pm
Tel: 6417 0952

Cafe Sambal

Where: 43, Doufuchi Hutong, Xicheng District
Open: 11:30 am – midnight
Tel: 6400 4875

Celebrating Eid al-Fitr with Brunei food

By Annie Wei

Last Friday, Muslims around the world celebrated Eid al-Fitr – the Festival of Fast-Breaking – a three-day festival to mark the end of Ramadan.

In Beijing, the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam hosted an open house event that showcased local Bruneian culture and cuisine. The open house concept is widely practiced in Brunei during Eid al-Fitr: relatives and friends are invited into homes to exchange greetings and enjoy festive food.

Sallehin Mohamad Taib, the defense attaché of the Brunei embassy, spent two days preparing the feast of satay and rice cooked with coconut milk.

For the satay, the beef and chicken were marinated in a day in advance.

All satay should be eaten with special peanut sauces that are rich and spicy. If pre-

paring at home, add some chopped cucumber to the presentation.

The kitchen also prepared two kinds of rice: Ketupat Nasi Impit, sticky rice wrapped in a woven palm leaf pouch and boiled, and Lemang Perantau, steamed coconut sticky rice wrapped with banana leaf.

The rice is light, with a nice flavor of coconut milk and a leafy aroma.

Rendang is a staple dish in Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore. Beef rendang is cooked with turmeric leaves, which give the dish a strong and unique aroma.

Taib said turmeric is not commonly

seen in town, so they had to order it at Sanyuanli Market one week in advance, as well as banana leaf.

Taib also said their chicken curry was augmented with lemon grass giving the dish a refreshing aroma.

Although there is no Bruneian restaurant in town, Taib said his country's food is very similar to its neighbors – Malaysian and Singapore – both rich and spicy with

An introduction to jazz musicians

By He Jianwei

At the previous Beijing Nine Gates Jazz Festival, performers included big stars from other genres of music, such as rock star Dou Wei and folk musician Xiao Juan. But this year, the festival aims to introduce more local jazz bands.

"The music festival is a good opportunity for communication between our bands and leading bands from other countries. Through the performances, the young bands might burgeon into outstanding bands," said Huang Yong, the festival's founder.

In the festival's inaugural year of 2006, performers came from all across China, but the founder, Huang, lamented there were few actual jazz musicians.

In the second year, he invited international jazz bands to Beijing who also gave lectures to Chinese music students.

As a top bassist, Huang understands the difficulty jazz bands face in China. "Jazz is a niche genre in China, and not many people listen to it," he said. "It's also very demanding of performers, requiring skilled techniques."

The leading jazz pianist Xia Jia graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music with a major in conducting. The classical music training made him a first-class pianist, and he fell in love with jazz because he realized that while playing jazz, he could be a musician and a composer at the same time.

The Xia Jia Trio has attended the festival since every year since it's founding because Xia believes the festival can bring the world's best musicians to China and show the world how far Chinese jazz has come.

"The Xia Jia Trio has performed in Europe as one of cultural exchange projects several times," Huang said. "I'm proud that he and his members can present top-level Chinese jazz music."

The emergence of young jazz bands gives him confidence that he can introduce more newcomers at this year's festival. "It doesn't mean a band will become famous overnight, but it's a precious experience for them to play with the best bands, which will hopefully inspire them in the future."

Huang selects international bands by listening to their live performances or watching their videos. He recommends listening to Colombian band Puerto Candelaria, which is on this year's program. "Its vigorous Latin style will excite everyone. You can hear Venezuelan bagpipes and salsa and samba music," he said.

Twenty-six bands from 16 countries will attend this year's festival.



Xia Jia



Opening ceremony

Beijing Jungle Big Band (China) and Mario Canonge Jazz Quartet (France)

Formerly Beijing Jazz Orchestra, Beijing Jungle Big Band is the first local jazz big band, playing a catalog of more than 1,000 tunes, including swing, jazz, funk, ballad, rock and Latin. The French quartet was established by the pianist Mario Canonge, who seeks to explore the richness of different musical styles.

When: September 9, 7:30 pm

Salty Candy (China) and Rootman (Thailand)

Salty Candy is a five-piece band that plays both traditional and contemporary jazz. The Rootman is nine-piece ensemble and boasts a diverse background of musical interest, including funk, jazz, soul and electronic.

When: September 10, 4 pm

Fresh Element (China) and Puerto Candelaria (Colombia)

Fresh Element is known for diverse interpretations of jazz standards as well as the conversion of hip-hop into an improvised style. Puerto Candelaria bases its sound in popular Colombian rhythms, a mixture of African, native indigenous and Spanish influences.

When: September 11, 4 pm

Sedar Double Trio (China) and Jerez-Texas (Spain)

Founded by the pianist Sedar Chin, Sedar Double Trio features melancholic melodies. Jerez-Texas is a leading music group in flamenco-jazz fusion.

When: September 11, 7:30 pm

Black Hot Pisces (China) and Yaron Gottfried's Trio (Israel)

Black Hot Pisces is a five-piece ensemble blending rock, Latin, neo-soul and acid with traditional jazz music. Yaron Gottfried's Trio brings a fresh new contemporary jazz interpretation to classical music, from the Renaissance to Baroque.

When: September 12, 4 pm

Elva & Lemon Trio (China) and Honda Masato Quintet (Japan)

Elva & Lemon Trio reinterprets classical jazz songs. Honda Masato Quintet's leader Honda Masato was voted the best saxophonist of Japan 11 times by a Japanese jazz magazine.

When: September 12, 7:30 pm

Where: Center Island Theater of Chaoyang Park, 1 Nongzhan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Admission: 50-180 yuan
Tel: 4008101887



Sedar Chin

Puerto Candelaria Photos provided by Nine Gates Jazz Festival



Ping Pong Jazz Band

Closing ceremony

Xia Jia Trio (China) and Ping Pong Jazz Band (US)

Xia Jia Trio is one of the leading jazz bands in China, led by Xia Jia, a classically trained pianist. The American band Ping Pong is lead by Yang Ying, an erhu virtuoso.

When: September 16, 7:30 pm

Lara Bello Jazz Band (Spain) and Glyn MacDonald Group (Australia)

Lara Bello Jazz Band fuses Lara Bello's vocals with her musical personality. Glyn McDonald Group plays classical and Latin music.

When: September 17, 7:30 pm

Zhan Xiaoli Quintet (China) and Vibe and Vocal Fantasy (Czech)

Zhan Xiaoli's study of classical and jazz music gives the quintet a classical flavor. Vibe and Vocal Fantasy's Radel Krampl mixes the vibraphone with the vibe-synthesizer.

When: September 18, 7:30 pm

Where: Concert Hall of the National Library, 33 Zhongguancun Nan Dajie, Haidian District

Admission: 80-580 yuan
Tel: 4006103721



Honda Masato

BEIJING TODAY Editor: He Jianwei Designer: Zhao Yan



Last Chestnuts

By Yao Weijie

Working with a Japanese cast and Japanese production team to shoot a film in seven days was one of the greatest challenges director Zhao Ye ever faced.

The resulting film, *Last Chestnuts*, is an expression of Zhao's distinctly Chinese thoughts on love and death against the backdrop of Nara, Japan.

Last Chestnuts follows the story of a Tokyo woman who goes to Kashihara, Nara Prefecture to find out how her son mysteriously died on a trip to fetch her chestnuts.

The mother, who is very ill, walks the road asking people whether they recognize any of the locations in the photos found on her son's digital camera.

The trip brings her into her contact with her son's old friends, who gradually reveal the circumstances of the boy's death. It's a terrible journey for the woman, whose emotions practically quiver on the surface as she refuses to confront reality.

"I wrote this story when my mother passed away last year. At that time, I was always wondering what her reaction would have been if I died first," said Zhao Ye, the director.

Zhao, a graduate of Beijing Film Academy, previously directed the feature films *Ma Wu Jia* (2007) and *Jalainur* (2008), which played at film festivals around the world.

At one festival screening, Zhao met Naomi Kawase, the Japanese director of "Narrative," a project that invites filmmakers to come to Nara Prefecture, Japan to make films set at the location.

Zhao would become the project's second invitee of 2010.

The first thing he noticed on his visit was the prefecture's unusually large chestnuts.

"An old lady saw me in the field and asked my Japanese partner what I was doing. My partner told her I came from China to do research. She ran back into her house and came out with a handful of boiled chestnuts," Zhao said.

"They were the most delicious chestnuts I ever had," Zhao said. "They tasted

like ice cream."

That exchange inspired many of the film's metaphoric scenes about chestnuts.

"The movie's success was largely due to the professionalism of the Japanese staff," Zhao said.

"I was forbidden to take my own cameraman. They arranged to have a 60-year-old Japanese man handle the job. He carried 30 to 40 kilograms of equipment every day and never said he was tired," he said

For the last scene, Zhao wanted to find a chestnut tree to use as the background. Because they were shooting in early winter, the trees had already turned yellow. Zhao's suggestion to use a fake tree was firmly rejected.

One of the staff members suggested trying to turn one of the yellowed trees green by attaching 50,000 green leaves. The prefecture mobilized all the women of Nara to begin making green chestnut leaves, and three days later the tree resembled springtime.

"Their unity moved me. After that, I didn't dare to request anything," Zhao said.

As a Chinese director, shooting a Japanese film was a new experience for Zhao.

"Some people said it doesn't look like a movie made by a foreign director. At first, I thought I was being praised: now I'm not so sure," Zhao said.

A foreign director should have his own characteristics with only hints of Nara's scattered throughout. Zhao said he may have lost this due to his goal of preserving the film's authenticity.

"I have learned a lot from this movie. Not just about the Japanese spirit, but also about love and death," he said.



With few days to shoot, many scenes had only one take. The director is satisfied with the film and the ability of leading actor Kaori Momoi to grab people's hearts so successfully.

Photos provided by UCCA



Best destinations during the moon festival

By Zhang Dongya

The full moon, a mesmerizing sight anywhere, has made especially noteworthy contributions to Chinese culture, inspiring poems and folk songs.

Next Monday is Mid-Autumn Festival, when the moon should be at its brightest. To commemorate this holiday, Beijing will hold a Mid-Autumn Cultural Tourism Festival called Lugou Xiaoyue, or Dawn Moon at Marco Polo Bridge, starting Saturday, with up to 166 activities and events, including a lantern show, Peking Opera performance, folk art exhibition and concert.

Dawn Moon at Marco Polo Bridge

The "Dawn Moon at Marco Polo Bridge" was one of the "eight miracles" of Beijing during ancient times, referring to the sight of a moon at dawn that hung over Lugou (Marco Polo) Bridge.

In 2008, when Mid-Autumn Festival was made a legal holiday, people took to gathering at Marco Polo Bridge to watch the moon on the special day.

Located in Fengtai District in southwest Beijing, the bridge stretches across Yongding River. There are two Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) steles, one at each end of the bridge. The east stele contains the four Chinese characters "Lugou Xiaoyue," an inscription by the Qianlong Emperor, while the Kangxi Emperor restored the bridge in 1689.

Legend has it that on the last day of the lunar calendar, when it is difficult to see the moon during daybreak in other parts of the city, one can see it if you stand on the bridge.

The bridge is 266 meters long, with 281 pillars and more than 400 stone lions engraved on it. Big and small lions express various gestures and assume different postures.

Between the pillars are breast boards with refined carvings. During ancient times, this bridge was the largest stone bridge in northern China.

In the past, before light pollution, the moon shone brightly

over West Hill, which appeared to be dyed black in the far distance. Reflected off the river, the moon would shimmer beautifully. Standing in the middle of the bridge, one could see the moon reflected off both sides of the bridge.

On the east end of Marco Polo Bridge is Wanping Fortress, built in 1640 during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). In 1937, it was the site of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the battle between Chinese and Japanese armies that launched the Second Sino-Japanese War. Visitors can still see bullet holes in the old walls today.

Marco Polo Bridge

Where: 77 Lugouqiao Chengnan Jie, Fengtai District
Getting there: Take Bus 77, 301, 309, 339, 458, 459, 624, 661, 694, 715, 952, 971 or 978 to Kangzhan Diaosuyuan stop. Or drive along Beijing-Shijiazhuang Expressway to Lugouqiao Wanpingcheng Exit, then turn right at the first traffic light.

Open: 7 am - 7 pm

Tel: 8389 2728

Admission to Wanping Fortress: 20 yuan

Continued on page 21...



The Macro Polo Bridge, extending over Xiaoyue Lake, is the best place to view the full moon during Mid-Autumn Festival.

CFP Photos



...continued from page 20

Sacrifice to the moon in Yuetan

Yuetan, or the Temple of the Moon, located on Nanlishi Lu in Xicheng District, was the place for emperors to hold sacrificial ceremonies to the moon during the Ming and Qing. It is now a large park.

Starting last year, people reenacted sacrificial ceremonies to the moon at the park. This year, a grand ceremony will be held with people dressed in ancient costumes. Also, the lanterns of Tu'er Ye, an old Beijing clay figurine, will be shown.

A photo exhibition displaying traditional customs and moon culture will be open to the public. Singing and dancing, and a calligraphy show, are also on the docket.

Calligraphy show

When: September 11-12, 6:30-7 pm

Intangible culture heritage show

When: September 11-12, 7-8 pm

Sacrificial ceremony

When: September 11-12, 7:30-8 pm and 9-9:30 pm

Yuetan Park

Where: Jia 6 Yuetan Bei Jie, Xicheng District
Getting there: Take Subway Line 2 to



Many traditional Chinese lanterns will be on display at Longtan Park during Mid-Autumn Festival.



Fuchengmen Station, or take Bus 13, 42, 61, 80, 101, 102, 121, 335, 336, 489 or 603 to Fuchengmen stop.

Open: 6 am - 9 pm

Tel: 6802 0940

Admission: 1 yuan

Other events during Mid-Autumn Festival

Lantern show in Longtan

The sixth lantern show will open today in Longtan Park. As many as 90 sets of lanterns will be displayed at park exits and entrances, around the lake, along the road and on the bridge. Visitors will see many traditional Chinese lanterns that have interesting stories to them, such as the tale of Goddess Chang'e flying to the moon.

Where: Longtan Park, 8 Longtan Lu, Dongcheng District

Getting there: Take Bus 8 or 561 to Longtanhu stop or take Bus 12, 34, 35, 41, 352, 561, 686, 707, 750, 827 or 829 to Guangmingluo stop.

Open: 6 am - 10 pm

When: September 9-18, 4-10 pm

Tel: 6714 4336

Admission: 10 yuan for lantern show

Peking Opera, movie and pingshu in Dongcheng

On Saturday, Dongcheng District will present the Peking Opera *Longfeng Chengxiang*, performed by amateurs at the Dongcheng Culture Center. Also, pingshu, a storytelling art performance, will be shown from Friday to Monday. All performances are free, but advance reservations are required.

Where: Dongcheng Culture Center, 111 Jiaodaokou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

Getting there: Take Subway Line 5 to Beixinxiao Station, or take Bus 107, 204 or 635 to Jiaodaokou Dong stop.

Tel: 6401 5552

Admission: Free

Orchid exhibition in Zhongshan Park

More than 100 high-quality orchids are in bloom at Huifang Garden in Zhongshan Park from mid-September to October. More than 2,000 flowers of 100 species, including chrysanthemum, flowering plum and flowering peach, are also open for viewing. In addition, a photo exhibition on the Xinhai Revolution and Sun Yat-sen has recently opened, and will be available through the end of this month.

Where: Zhongshan Park, 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District

Getting there: Take Subway Line 1 to Tian'anmen West Station, or take Bus 1, 5, 10, 22, 37, 52, 90, 99, 205 or 728 to Tian'anmen Xi stop.

Open: 6 am - 8 pm

Tel: 6605 5431

Admission: 3 yuan



Yuetan will hold a grand ceremony to reproduce a sacrifice ritual done in ancient times to worship the moon. CFP Photos

Micro movies bring hope to new directors



By Chu Meng

Micro movies are shot within a short period of time and last only a few minutes or even shorter. Most are completed on an extremely small budget and offer a cheap way for grassroots directors to realize their dreams.

Once the realm of film festivals, the genre has taken off due to being perfectly suited to new media platforms such as mobile phones and tablet computers. They are also easily shared across social networks and microblogs.

Wang Yumeng, 30, has been working as a news film director for BTV for the last seven years.

After graduating from the photography department at the Beijing Film Academy, Wang was forced to bury his dreams of moviemaking in exchange for a stable paycheck.

But life gave Wang a second chance when he stumbled on Sina's microblog channel this June.

At that time, the Web portal was hosting a micro movie competition for films with a running time of three to five minutes.

But micro movies are far different from the shorts commonly found on YouTube. A micro movie must have a solid and thought-provoking plot.

Most importantly, the movies are easily distributed and there can be no concern about long-term box office profits.

"Micro movies are especially suited for play on new media platforms like mobile phones and tablet computers. They are quickly shared by viewers and can generate real-time feedback online," Wang said.

He registered for the competition in July. He spent one week finishing the script for his micro movie, a friendship story he had been kicking around his head since his university years. And he spent another three weeks finding actors, shooting and finishing post-production.

In August, he handed in *Tokyo Love Story*, a micro movie about brotherhood among those born in the '80s. He said it was a topic that had been overlooked in Chinese literature and one that would be compelling on the small screen.

"It cost me less than 50,000 yuan," he said. The budget was far less than what other forms of moviemaking would require.

His work became the most popular film from the competition



Route 66 was sponsored by Cadillac (China).

when it went online during the first week of September.

The achievement has given him renewed confidence.

Wang is already working on what he hopes will be his second and third micro movie.

"The opportunity to fulfill my dream and let tens of thousands of people watch my movie is worth more than 50,000 yuan," he said. Some small advertisers have contacted him to advertise in his future movies.

Wang hopes micro movies can be the seed for future cinema work.

Lun Wuxin, the organizer of Sina's micro movie competition, said the company received 80 submissions.

"Their movies were love stories, comedies, thrillers and some other marginal fictional genres. Directors were usually young professionals with an interest in film or people with no film or storytelling experience at all," Lun said.

Micro movies give gifted young directors an opportunity to shine in front of many viewers, he said.

Lei Feng Xia, or *Lei Feng the Hero*, was similarly successful. As of press time, the imaginative superhero micro movie received 2 million views on the Internet.

This movie explores the harsh

contrast between dreams and reality faced by its characters, and aims to remind viewers of the long-forgotten campaign to "Learn from Comrade Lei Feng," in which Chinese people were encouraged to help each other and serve society.

"The new medium of the micro movie was perfectly suited to taking this serious topic and painting it with black humor," Lun said.

Since the first Chinese micro movie appeared last year, several directors have been invited by multinational brands to shoot movie-advertisements.

Micro movies became a new favorite of luxury brand advertisers this year. Many have been commercially successful on the microblog circuit.

Old Boy, released online in January, was sponsored by Chevrolet; *Watching Mind*, released in May, was directed by famous director Jiang Wen and sponsored by Canon; Cadillac's micro movies were famous for starring top-tier actors like Daniel Wu in *Hair-Trigger* and Karen Mok in *Route 66*.

The movies have been a powerful form of advertising on the Internet. "They are not simply throwing out logos and pictures. They have a nice story, elegant audio-visual languages and a skillful presentation of the brand concept," said Wang Yifei, a brand marketer at Herun Media.

"To make viewers warm up to the product in a subtle way is a much more advanced method of advertising and marketing."

It has been reported that this year's *Meet Hawthorn*, which is being produced for the city of Yichang, Hubei province, will be a love story that heavily features Yichang's tourism resources.

The movie will be released on Sina.com under the Yichang government's official microblog.



Four Nights Legends stars Zhou Xun and Stanley Huang.



Watching Mind, released in May, is directed by famous director Jiang Wen and sponsored by Canon.

Recent Success Stories

1. Four Nights Legends

Sponsor: Samsung (China)

Release date: October 2010

Scenario: This micro movie series, which includes *Clippers Were Magic* and four other films, talks about the commercialization of love. It stars Zhou Xun and Stanley Huang.

2. Route 66

Sponsor: Cadillac (China)

Release date: May 2011

Scenario: Hong Kong singer and actress Karen Mok stars in Cadillac's second micro movie, *Faithful to Freedom*. It was filmed on the famed US Route 66, the location of many similar road films.

3. Watching Mind

Sponsor: Canon (China)

Release date: May 2011

Scenario: Directed by Jiang Wen, one of top Chinese screen directors, this movie examines the difficult experiences of a divorced father who takes his son to watch a football game. It was shot using Canon equipment.

Dinning



A buffet to tempt any sweet tooth

Step into Café on Floor 6 of the Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town to experience a buffet prepared by Swedish Chef Robert Gynne.

Come prepared to indulge in 50 desserts at dinner and 30 at lunch, many of which are served at live dessert stations.

The buffet includes a mountain of cold seafood, local favorites, spicy hotpot, Hong Kong barbecue and fresh meats grilled in minutes.

Where: 6th floor, Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, 3 Sanfeng North Area (southeast of Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Chaoyang District

Tel: 5909 6688 ext. 3219

Fabulous seafood promotion at Grand Millennium Beijing

From this September, the renowned Master Chef of Yao Chi Chinese Restaurant Chung Fai Men will tantalize your taste buds with his Seafood Spectacular.

The menu includes charcoal grilled scombrid fish, fried rice with sea urchin and asparagus and steamed runny egg with sea urchin. Delight in these and other special treats at Yao Chi Chinese Restaurant.

Where: Yao Chi Chinese Restaurant, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuai Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 8587 6888 ext. 3013

Season of pure Huaiyang Cuisine at Scene a Café

Huaiyang cuisine emphasizes quality of ingredients and preparation. Simple yet carefully planned tastes guarantee the success of each plate. Scene a Café presents three light, fresh and mellow Huaiyang dinner menus with a rotation of dishes for your taste buds.

Where: Scene a Café, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie

When: Until September 16

Cost: 298 yuan per person

Tel: 6505 2266 ext. 35

Healthy bubblicious

Bubblicious is getting healthy this autumn. Come and experience Beijing's largest salad bar and its amazing detox drinks. There are interactive calorie guessing competitions and great prizes to be won.

Where: The Westen Beijing Chaoyang, 7 Dongsanhuai Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: September 18, 11:30 am - 15:30 pm

Cost: 368-428 yuan per person (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 5922 8880



Mid-Autumn celebrations

To celebrate the Chinese tradition of Mid-Autumn Festival, Shangri-La's Kerry Center Hotel, Beijing offers patrons a select range of mooncake flavors.

This year's themed packages are designed to be re-used. The design is part of Shangri-La Group's commitment to corporate social responsibility. All packages combine classic and modern elements.

The China Grand 12-piece box is designed as a drawer wrapped in prints of Chinese scenery. It can be reused as a jewelry or storage box.

The collection includes a charity box of four mooncakes with lotus paste and egg yolk filling, priced at 138 yuan per box: 50 yuan from each sale will be donated to Children's Hope Family.

Where: The Horizon Chinese Restaurant, 1 Guanhua Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 8565 2188

Four-bedroom modern apartment at Chaoyang Park, Greenlake Place

Greenlake Place is one of the best known apartment complexes in the Chaoyang Park area.

This unit has four bedrooms, a kitchen, a living room and three bathrooms with new IKEA furniture and General Electric appliances. The living room is spacious, and the bathroom contains both a bath tub and shower. Everything has beautiful hardwood flooring, and the plasma TV is connected to satellite.

There is one king-size bedroom, a modern bathroom, spacious living and dining areas and fully finished kitchen with granite countertops. The neighborhood's 24-hour security and phone system will keep your home safe and secure.

It is located near the south gate of Chaoyang Park, just down the road from Sanlitun Bar Street. It is conveniently close to restaurants and grocery stores.

Contact: Mary 18210593659
Email: meigelianhang@126.com

Training

Private tai-chi instructor

Visitors and long-time residents in Beijing may be interested to learn more about tai-chi, a traditional martial art and meditation exercise.

I have studied tai-chi for nine years and am a certified coach. Tai-chi can help people increase their flexibility, reduce stress and improve mental clarity.

I offer beginning and continuing lessons in the 24 Yang Style for 100 yuan per hour in Ritan Park.

Tel: 13366166844
Email: michelle_gong7717@hotmail.com



Beijing tour guide Yee

Greetings! My name is Yee Lee and I work at Waytobeijing Travel Service. I'm a local English-speaking tour guide and trip advisor.

Waytobeijing can help you arrange every element of your next China trip. Call if you need an airport or port transfer, car or van rental for business, shopping or sightseeing, a tour guide, translator or interpreter for English, French, Spanish, German or Italian, or an English-speaking driver to take you by car or van to other provinces.

Contact: Yee Lee
Email: yeelee@waytobeijing.com

(By Jackie Zhang)

Rent

Spacious 2-bedroom apartment in Sanlitun

This apartment is located on Sanlitun, Chaoyang District and faces Garden 1 of SOHO. It is 145 square meters and has two bedrooms, a living room, two bathrooms and a finished kitchen. The apartment is within walking distance of Sanlitun Bar Street.

It is opposite the east gate of Worker's Stadium and comes fully furnished with all household appliances. It is near public transportation hubs, restaurants and shops. The apartment is on one of the top floors, so it has a very nice view.

Rent: 16,000 yuan per month
Tel: 15010393726
Email: 105230488@qq.com

Service

Next week

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Fri, Sept. 9

Nightlife
Flunk

Founded in 2001, this Norwegian trip-hop band consists of producer Ulf Nygaard, guitarist Jo Bakke, drummer Erik Rund and vocalist Anja Oyen Vister. Its music is described as melodic but uplifting.

Where: The One Club, Building 5, 718 Art and Culture Zone, 19 Ganluyuan, Gaobeidian Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 120 yuan advance purchase, 150 yuan at the door

Tel: 5129 0082

Nightlife
Queen Sea Big Shark

This Beijing-based rock quartet

has a funky and hard rock sound, combining tight rhythms with loud and raunchy guitar riffs, which in some ways recreates the New York alternative rock scene of the early 1980s.

Where: Star Live, 79 Hepingli Xi Jie, Yonghegong, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 80 yuan advance purchase, 100 yuan at the door

Tel: 6428 4080

Sat, Sept. 10



Drama

A Pipe Dream

Inspired by *A Story in a Pillow*, a 1,200-year-old romantic fiction during the Tang Dynasty (618-907), director Huang Ying's new play discusses the influence of traditional values and philosophy in modern China.

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 160-240 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Movie

Dead Poets Society (1989)

This film tells the story of an English teacher inspiring his students in a conservative and aristocratic boys prep school to change their lives of conformity through his teaching of poetry and literature.

Where: Lady Book Salon, 2F New World Lady's Mall, 7 Dongdajie, Chongwen District

When: 6 pm

Admission: 20 yuan including a cup of tea

Tel: 6708 7470



Sun, Sept. 11

Nightlife

Aka Moon Trio

This Belgian jazz group consists of saxophonist Fabrizio Cassol, drummer Stephane Galland and pianist Fabian Fiorini, who juggle polyrhythms and

polyphonies.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan

Tel: 6401 4611



Mon, Sept. 12

Nightlife

If the World Goes Blind

Blind folk singer Zhou Yunpeng collaborates with folk musician Xiao He to sing and recite poems to celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival.

Where: CHE Theater, Chaoyang Culture Center, 17 Jintai Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 60-100 yuan, 30 yuan for students

Tel: 5129 0082



Tue, Sept. 13

Exhibition

Sorry 404!

Xia Guo's solo exhibition includes oil paintings, installations and videos created in the past few years, discussing how people receive information and how information interferes in

people's lives.

Where: D Space, Sanlitun Nan Jie, 4 Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 3, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6593 7710

Wed, Sept. 14



Exhibition

Parallel Country

This is a solo exhibition by Zhao Na, who is fond of pencil sketches. She manages to create a surreal world in tones of black and white: a world that parallels the real one.

Where: Mizuma and One Gallery, 241 Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 16, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5127 3267

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Thu, Sept.

Movie

The Prestige (2006)

This mystery thriller is about two rival stage magicians in London at the end of the 19th century. They start out as admiring friends and partners, but when their biggest trick goes terribly awry, they become enemies for life.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 8229 6153

(By He Jianwei)